

The Federal Archaeology Office

In 1988, the Government of Canada released a discussion paper titled *Federal Archaeological Heritage—Protection and Management*. The paper was a result of previous concerns expressed by the archaeological/heritage communities that there was no umbrella policy requiring that archaeological resources under federal jurisdiction be protected and managed. Recognizing that much of the responsibility for archaeological heritage in Canada rested with the provinces, the document examined what the federal government was doing with respect to the archaeological heritage within its jurisdiction and identified improvements that could be made to its approach in the future.

In response to the paper, submissions and presentations were received from many interested parties: federal agencies, provincial and territorial governments, Aboriginal groups, cultural and historical groups, the academic community and other members of the interested Canadian public. These efforts resulted in the preparation of the *Archaeological Heritage Policy Framework* (AHPF). Approved and announced by the Canadian government in 1990, the framework states:

As heritage protection is an essential element in the affirmation of our Canadian identity, and as our archaeological heritage is a source of inspiration and knowledge, it is the policy of the Government of Canada to protect and manage archaeological resources.

The government also realized that the policy had to be developed from the framework and that legislation to effectively implement it had to be prepared and enacted. Federal archaeology legislation based upon further consultations and refinement of archaeological heritage concerns was drafted but was eventually put aside for the time being.

Context

In 1993, the Government of Canada established the Department of Canadian Heritage (DCH); legislation formally establishing the department was passed by the Canadian Parliament in the spring of 1996. Federal government initiatives and responsibilities addressing heritage matters were transferred and consolidated into this department. Two of the major programs included Parks Canada (transferred from Environment Canada) and Cultural Development and Heritage (transferred from the former Department of Communications). The

Archaeological Services Branch, National Historic Sites Directorate, of Parks Canada provided archaeology-related advice, policy and services to Parks Canada land managers including the national parks, national historic sites, national marine conservation areas and historic canals. The Directorate for Archaeological Resource Management, Heritage Branch, was located within the Cultural Development and Heritage sector and provided advice and policy on archaeological matters for all federal lands and waters not managed by Parks Canada.

A year later, Canada initiated a government wide comprehensive Program Review of all federal departmental programs and activities in order to determine the best, most effective and cost-efficient way of delivering those programs and services that are appropriate for the federal government. Program Review directed that responsibility for archaeology within the federal government should reside in one organization to act as the government's focal point on archaeological matters. That new organization—the Federal Archaeology Office—was to reside in Parks Canada.

Role

The Federal Archaeology Office (FAO) will provide both federal and departmental policy and legislative initiatives and, within DCH, operational services. It will:

- have a federal policy role for the protection and management of archaeological resources on all lands and waters under federal jurisdiction, as well as those under direct responsibility of DCH (national parks, national marine conservation areas, national historic sites and historic canals) and those under cost-sharing and cooperative agreements;
- advise federal departments and agencies concerning the protection and management of archaeological resources;
- provide expertise in support of the establishment of new national parks and new national historic sites through research and advice to the National Parks Directorate and to the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (the DCH Minister's advisors on historic matters);
- represent DCH in providing advice on Aboriginal heritage issues in land claim and self-government negotiations;

- provide services and advice to Parks Canada park and site managers related to the survey, identification, evaluation, protection and presentation of archaeological resources;
- consult and negotiate with provincial and territorial agencies to harmonize research requirements (such as permits) and to assist with the development and administration of protection mechanisms for archaeological resources (such as heritage shipwrecks);
- interact with, and support stakeholder groups in the wider archaeological community, as well as with the public, to promote general awareness of archaeological resources and to facilitate resource protection and co-operative ventures;
- provide advice and services for *in situ* archaeological resources, archaeological collections/assemblages (artifacts and records) and data bases;
- participate in the development and delivery of heritage presentation and public awareness programs of DCH;
- participate with national and international organizations on improving awareness of archaeological issues and developing and promoting standards and guidelines related to archaeological heritage management, including information management.

Outside DCH, the departmental role will be mainly one of advice and guidance, with headquarters developing national standards and approaches based upon consultation and specialist advice.

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, which is responsible for the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA), recognizes DCH as an "expert department" for matters involving impact assessment on cultural resources. Although the CEAA primarily addresses the biophysical environment, it also addresses the changes to the environment that affect cultural resources (archaeological, paleontological, historical and architectural resources). As an expert department, DCH will provide information and advice to federal land managers and heritage agencies on the potential impacts of projects on cultural resources.

Organization

Currently (October 1996) the FAO is undergoing an internal reorganization to better meet the needs of the integrated responsibility for the new Office, the AHPF, the requirements of Program Review, the challenge of a redefined Parks Canada Agency and DCH. Within these broad parameters, the FAO-headquarters proposes to organize itself into five responsibility areas.

- **Federal Archaeological Resource Management** will develop and co-ordinate a national program for the protection, manage-

ment and use of archaeological resources on federal lands and waters through the development of federal archaeological initiatives, policies and guidelines; develop impact assessment strategies and guidelines for archaeological/Aboriginal resources; and develop policies and direction for heritage shipwrecks in federal waters.

- **Aboriginal Heritage** will develop and co-ordinate a national strategy for Aboriginal heritage sites on federal lands and waters through the coordination of program requirements in support of pre-park establishment initiatives; support the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada for the establishment of new national historic sites commemorating Aboriginal history; develop guidelines for the preparation of commemorative integrity strategies; provide advice to land claim and self-government negotiators; and prepare policies on Aboriginal/anthropological issues.
- **Underwater Archaeology**, as a centre of expertise for underwater archaeology, will continue to direct, manage and participate in federal marine archaeology activities for Parks Canada such as surveys, mitigation, monitoring, and training; prepare analyses of underwater archaeology issues such as heritage shipwrecks and international standards and advice; support the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada for the establishment of new national historic sites commemorating underwater cultural resources; and advise other federal and provincial agencies on underwater archaeology matters. Underwater archaeology is a centralized unit based in headquarters.
- **Material Culture Research**, as a centre of expertise on European-based material culture, will continue to support Parks Canada's programs through the preparation of manuals and guides, glossaries, curatorial displays, research and training.
- **Archaeological Information Management** will develop and maintain information systems and data bases on federal archaeological resources; provide information presentation services such as photography and illustration; and manage the FAO's archaeological collection (artifacts and records).

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